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ABSTRACT

This book presents an overview of working-class life in England, showing how women from working-class backgrounds still seldom achieve higher level academic qualifications and the lifestyle to which they lead. Analyzing her own experience and that of others of similar background, the author shows how their mothers and fathers held low expectations of education and what it might offer their daughters, and so did little to support their education. The book exposes the repeating pattern of early marriage with an unskilled and often exploited partner. It also looks at teachers and reveals how, instead of encouraging working-class girls (whom teachers often perceive as "misfits") to succeed, the teachers themselves discriminated against the bright working-class girls who managed to gain entry to privileged schools or grammar streams. According to the book, not much in this pattern has changed during the past several generations. (Contains 509 references.) (KC)

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